



A wolf prowls one of many naturalistic enclosures at Tierpark Hellabrunn. Photo below: a young boy takes an interest in a polar bear.



An audience gathers to watch a popular attraction, the feeding of the seals. Some 5,000 animals of a wide range of species populate the zoo, a world pioneer in presenting fauna in natural settings.

Getting up close, personal at Tierpark Hellabrunn

**Story and photos by
Karl Weisel**
*104th Area Support Group Public
Affairs Office*

Even if you're just passing through Munich on your way to points farther south, consider making a pit stop at the Tierpark Hellabrunn. Munich's zoo is one of Germany's most enjoyable animal showcases.

Besides featuring a wealth of diverse biological species, 5,000 animals housed in settings that seem more natural than some of the more cramped facilities in Europe, the Munich zoo also offers a host of fun entertainment for children and the young at heart. Camel rides, playgrounds, a rope bridge connecting two parts of the park, petting zoos and several outdoor cafes ensure that visitors can make a day out of it.

Declared the world's first "geo zoo" in 1911, Tierpark Hellabrunn consistently strives to make the zoo both visitor-friendly and more hospitable to its animal inhabitants. Wolves patrol the perimeter of one grassy area before fading back into

the trees. Polar bears frolic in icy waters separated only by thick glass from the viewing public in another enclosure. A young giraffe accompanies his parents in yet another large area while not far away elephants trumpet loudly as feeding time nears.

Feeding time is a highlight at the zoo — particularly when the zookeepers enter the penguin and seal enclosures. The seals are especially energetic as they glide through the water only to splash up on the stairs near the keeper in a bid for yet another fish hand-fed from his bucket. Lists of feeding times are located throughout the park and on the zoo's website at http://www.tierpark-hellabrunn-muenchen.de/e_01_willkommen/index.htm.

Several petting zoos in the Tierpark Hellabrunn allow young people to get closer to wildlife. Near the Isar River entrance one quickly discovers a petting zoo where European fallow deer, Baltic domestic sheep and dwarf goats await treats from visitors. Automats in the zoo

provide the appropriate food for a small fee.

Farther back in the zoo near a large playground area and outdoor restaurants is yet another petting zoo where visitors are invited to encounter goats, sheep, cows and donkeys.

The zoo is located in the Thalkirchen section of Munich, on the banks of the Isar River and not far from a large campground. If you decide to camp for the night to give yourself more time to get to know the area, several beer gardens are within walking distance, including the Waldwirtschaft Grosshesselohe which frequently features live Dixieland music, grill-style dining and liters of Bavarian beer.

Parking is also available in the woods across from the zoo at Tierparkstrasse 30 for €2.50. Signs leading to the zoo are located on Munich's main thoroughfare through the city.

Entrance to the zoo is €7 for adults, €5.50 for youths age 15-18, €4 for youths age 4-14 and free for those under age 4.



A wide range of fauna manage to live in harmony at Tierpark Hellabrunn. Photo left: Nesting pelicans gather in one of the zoo's enclosures.

Don't miss Munich

**Story and photos by
Karl Weisel**
*104th Area Support Group Public
Affairs Office*

Most Americans on whirlwind tours of Europe make it a point to visit the classic cities — Rome, Paris, London — while stationed in Europe. But many overlook one of the truly great cities not so far from home — Munich.

Bavaria's capital may have a reputation as home to the ever popular annual bout of debauchery known as the Oktoberfest, but the city offers a wealth of other attractions. Palaces, historical buildings, museums galore, cozy beer gardens on every corner and miles of green areas provide for a wealth of sightseeing and relaxation opportunities.

If indeed your heart is set on the annual Oktoberfest, which features 14 huge beer tents and a host of carnival rides that attract visitors from all over the globe, this year's festival runs from Sept. 20 to Oct. 5. Rather than traveling by car, hop the train or catch a ride with your local USO to avoid parking problems and the risk of mixing drinking and driving.

But keep in mind that you needn't wait for the Oktoberfest to enjoy the ambiance of Munich. Besides overflowing with culture the city has a lively student section — Schwabing and the Universität — a bustling shopping district up and down the Kaufinger Strasse, more amiable beer halls than any other German city and a park featuring miles of biking trails, beer gardens, lakes and playgrounds.

Munich is also the richest museum city in all of Germany. Like the Louvre in Paris or the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, Munich's Alte and Neue Pinakotheken feature a treasure

trove of old and new masters in painting and sculpture. Youngsters will enjoy hours of exploration in the Deutsche Museum, a technological showcase like the Ben Franklin Museum in Philadelphia. History buffs might want to delve into Bavarian history at the Bavarian Historical Museum.

And then of course there are the glass-domed stadiums of the 1972 Olympics. Hop on the U-Bahn at Marienplatz for a ride out to the Olympiazentrum to marvel at the skeleton-like glass constructions. If you're lucky you may visit on one of those days when a festival of some kind is being celebrated featuring live music, refreshments and more.

Medieval roots

Founded in the 12th century by Henry the Lion, Munich quickly became a center for commerce and royal households. As the capital of the Duchy of Bavaria-Munich in the 13th century, many grand households were constructed leading to the city becoming an imperial city in 1338. In 1806, as the capital of Bavaria, the city was home to Germany's first state constitution.

Among the highlights of a visit to Munich is spending some time wandering through the 900-acre Englischer Gartens. Weather permitting, visitors can join the natives in biking or inline skating through the vast park area.

Completed after the Thirty Years War in the 18th century, the Englischer Gartens is the perfect place to rest your feet after sightseeing. Enjoy a Frisbee toss on the grass or lunch at one of the many beer gardens scattered throughout the park. One of the popular center's of Munich is the Chinese Pagoda area in the park where one can sample local Bavarian culinary fare such as ribs and radishes, sided by a huge fresh

pretzel and washed down with a liter mug of Bavarian brew. Join the hundreds of tourists and natives sitting at long outdoor tables enjoying the live music of a traditional oompah band.

There's plenty more to do and see in Munich including visits to its many noted churches, climbing up the tower of the old Town Hall at Marienplatz and listening to its glockenspiel, trekking out to Nymphenburg Castle (a palace modeled on Versailles), sampling goodies at the Viktualien Market or simply strolling along the cold, rushing Isar River. Catch live music at a club in Schwabing or go shopping for bargains at one of the city's flea markets.

In August visitors can head out to the Olympic park area to enjoy art, handicrafts, fun and games. The Arts and Crafts Holiday Academy in 2003 is situated around the Olympic Lake and also features a mini sailing regatta. A Summer Festival in the Olympia Park featuring open-air theater, live rock and jazz music will be featured through Aug. 24.

Gateway to the Alps

Another great thing about a visit to Munich is that it is not far from some of Germany's most picturesque countryside. A short drive or train ride south from the metropolis takes one into the heart of the Alps, to a host of scenic villages such as Murnau near Garmisch-Partenkirchen, or to the many lakes, castles and monasteries in the area.

For more information on Bavaria and its capital stop by your local library and pick up a reference book or point your browser to http://www.muenchen-tourist.de/englisch/index_e.htm.



Visitors to Munich quaff the local brew in the Englischer Gartens, an urban oasis characteristic of this worldly city's penchant for relaxation and enjoyment. Tourists can spend hours exploring cultural gems knowing they can always find a pleasant eatery or beer garden to replenish their energies.